

**REMARKS**

By way of this amendment and reply to the final Office Action mailed April 24, 2003, claim 7 has been amended. Claims 1-7 are presently pending for further consideration.

It is respectfully requested that this 'after-final' amendment and reply be considered and entered, since: a) it is believed to place the application in condition for allowance, and b) the amendment to claim 7 is minor in nature and does not require further searching by the Examiner.

As an initial matter, the Office Action asserts that claims 1, 3, 5, 6 and 7 are independent claims, but this assertion is incorrect. Claims 1, 3, 5 and 6 were originally independent, but claims 3, 5 and 6 were amended in dependent form in the response (submitted on Feb. 7, 2003) to the previous Office Action. In addition, the Office Action states on line 6 of Item 4: ". . . is set to have a correspondence relation with respect to the directory . . .", which is a feature that was deleted in the previously-filed response. Judging from this statement, and from the incorrect assertion about claims 1, 3, 5 and 6 being independent, it seems that the Examiner examined the original claims.

Therefore, it is respectfully requested that, if this application is not considered to be in condition for allowance, the Office Action be made non-final.

In the Office Action, claims 1-4 and 7 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Applicant's admitted prior art in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,880,727 to Barrett et al. (actually, this should be a 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) rejection); and claims 5 and 6 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Applicant's admitted prior art in view of Barrett et al. and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,115,040 to Bladow et al. These rejections are traversed for at least the reasons given below.

According to the present invention, the directory hierarchy of an operation screen has a one-to-one correspondence with the directory hierarchy of a file

server. Further, in order to maintain this one-to-one correspondence, the present invention provides the function that when the directory structure (hierarchy) of the operation screen is changed, that of the file server is changed in accordance with the changed contents of the operation hierarchy. Thus, the directory hierarchy and access control of the file server are automatically changed in accordance with the change of the hierarchical structure of the operation screen, which produces the advantage that the hierarchical structure can be controlled without involving any user operation.

To accomplish this, a series of procedures pertinent to the access control are utilized to collectively deal with the hierarchical structures of the operation screen and file server on the file operation screen and save the time and trouble to manually change the operation screen and buttons.

In order to collectively deal with the hierarchical structures of the operation screen and the file server, such a structure is required that the hierarchy of an operation screen is automatically generated and the hierarchy and access control of the file server are composed, deleted and changed at the time the operation screen is changed.

Claims 1 and 7 were previously amended so as to clarify correspondence between the operation hierarchy of the operation screen and the directory hierarchy of the file server. In addition, by reciting "such that" in the claims, it was emphasized that changing the directory is performed so that the operation screen corresponds with the file server.

While Applicant's admitted prior art mentions an operation screen and a file server, it does not mention a directory structure or a directory hierarchy. Page 2, lines 10-22 of the present specification, as mentioned on page 8 of the Office Action, merely describes a common file server for temporarily storing a read image and set a directory of storage destination of the previously fetched image on the file server to the operation button of a scanner device so that the process for confirming or modifying the read or fetched image can be effected in

a place separate from the scanner device. This disclosure has nothing at all to do with a directory structure or a directory hierarchy.

Also, while Barrett et al. discloses an operation screen and a directory structure, Barrett et al. does not provide an explanation about the directory structure of another device unrelated to the operation screen or the fact that the directory structures of the operation screen and the other device correspond with each other. In particular, Barrett et al. does not describe the relation between the operation screen and any other device. Therefore, it is clear that the present invention could not be obtained based on the combined teachings of Applicant's admitted prior art and Barrett et al.

Accordingly, since Bladow et al. does not rectify the shortcomings of Applicant's admitted prior art and Barrett et al., all of the presently pending claims patentably distinguish over the cited art of record.

Therefore, Applicant believes that the present application is now in condition for allowance, and an early indication of allowance is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a check being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith, Applicant hereby petitions for such extension under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 and authorizes payment of any such extensions fees to Deposit Account No. 19-0741.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date

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